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Rec. 4

1. The Federal Records Act of 1950 made mandatory the establishment of a Records Management Program in all government agencies.
2. As a part of this program, the same law authorized the establishment and operation of records centers. Section 511 (b) of the above act defines the term "records center" as an establishment maintained by a Federal agency for the housing, servicing, security, and processing of records that must be preserved for varying periods of time, and need not be retained in office equipment and space.
3. The law recognizes that the records center operation is an integral part of the records management program. In this Agency the Center should maintain a close working relationship with the Records Disposition Branch of the Records Services Division in order to function effectively.
4. For more than 10 years, the experience of Federal agencies has demonstrated the need for inclusion of a records center operation within the organization charged with responsibility for accomplishing the records management program. Management people have now accepted this fact as a principle of organization. Among the better known center operations are those conducted by the following agencies:

A. GSA

Eleven records centers are operated on the regional level under the staff direction of the Records Management Division in the National Archives. The centers are supervised in the regions by a records management official who reports directly to this Records Management Division.

B. Department of the Army

Their records centers are operated as an integral part of the records management program in the Adjutant General's Office.

C. Department of the Navy

Records centers of this Agency are operated by the records management organization in the Executive Office of the Secretary.

D. State Department

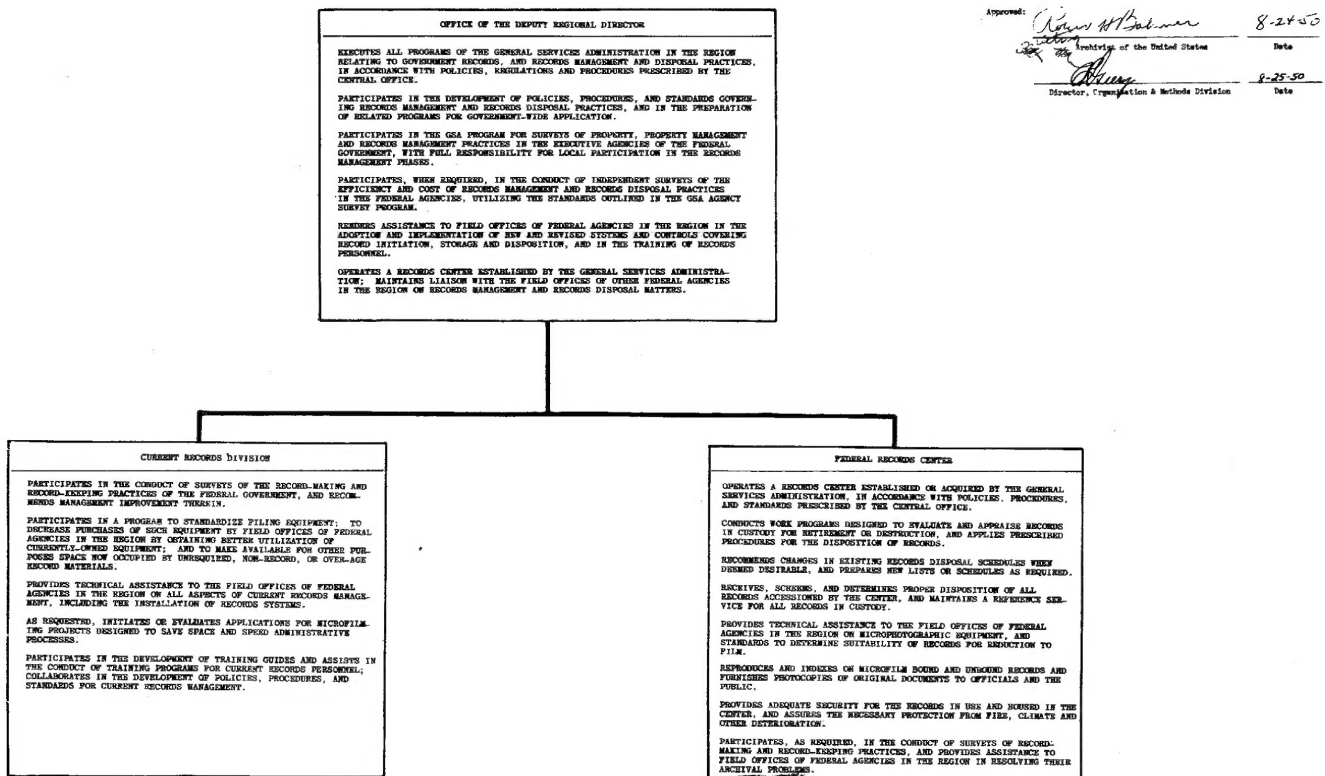
The records management office of the Department operates the Agency records center.

5. The relationship of the Records Center operation to other phases of the records management program is illustrated by the operational interdependence existing between the Records Center Branch and the

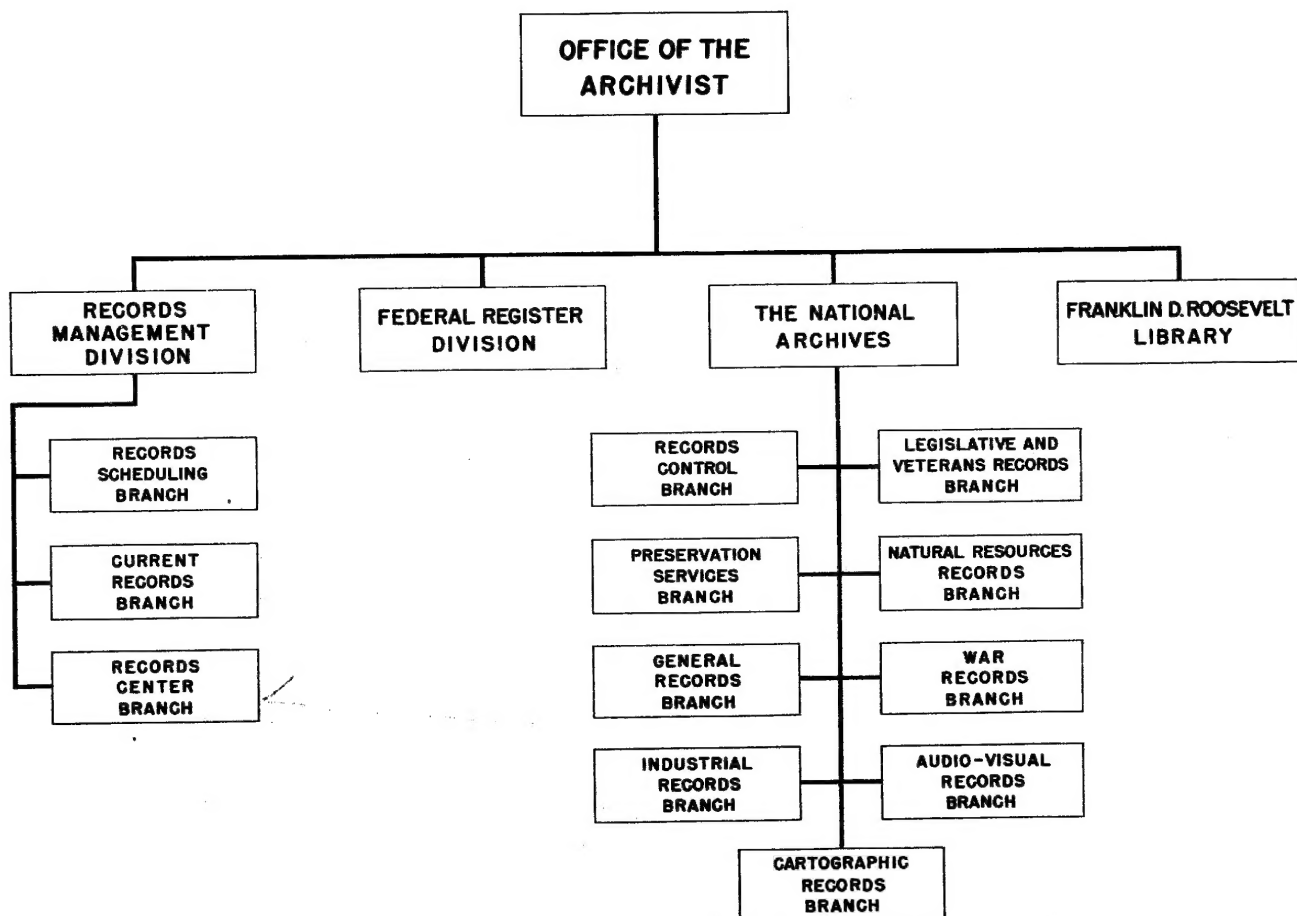
Records Disposition Branch. The Disposition Branch conducts surveys of records in operating areas, and draws up control schedules that recommend retirement of certain records to the Center. The survey is the initiating action that results in the accessioning of records by the Center. During the course of the survey, Disposition Branch personnel must be able to assure the operating people that reference service on files transferred to the Center will be adequate for their needs. The Reference Service Section of the Center is responsible for meeting this commitment. The Center conducts continuing work programs designed to evaluate and control scheduled and non-scheduled records in custody for retention or destruction. The results of such studies are submitted to the Disposition Branch for approval and coordination with the office creating the records in question.

6. The Records Center operation in this Agency was planned with a view to the development of career personnel in the field of records management. The Center recruits personnel in the lower grades and, with formal and on-the-job training, prepares those qualified for advancement into the other phases of records management. This plan is not only an incentive to employees of the Center but will also provide personnel with a background in records work for advancement to staff positions. Certainly, Records Center employees should be under the same Career Service Board as the Records Management staff.
7. Detaching the Records Center from the Records Management function can result in some serious budget problems. As a detached unit, additional personnel, space and equipment, geared to the needs of an over-all program, must be approved by the Chief of an office who cannot be familiar with program requirements.

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION REGIONAL OFFICE RECORDS MANAGEMENT SERVICE

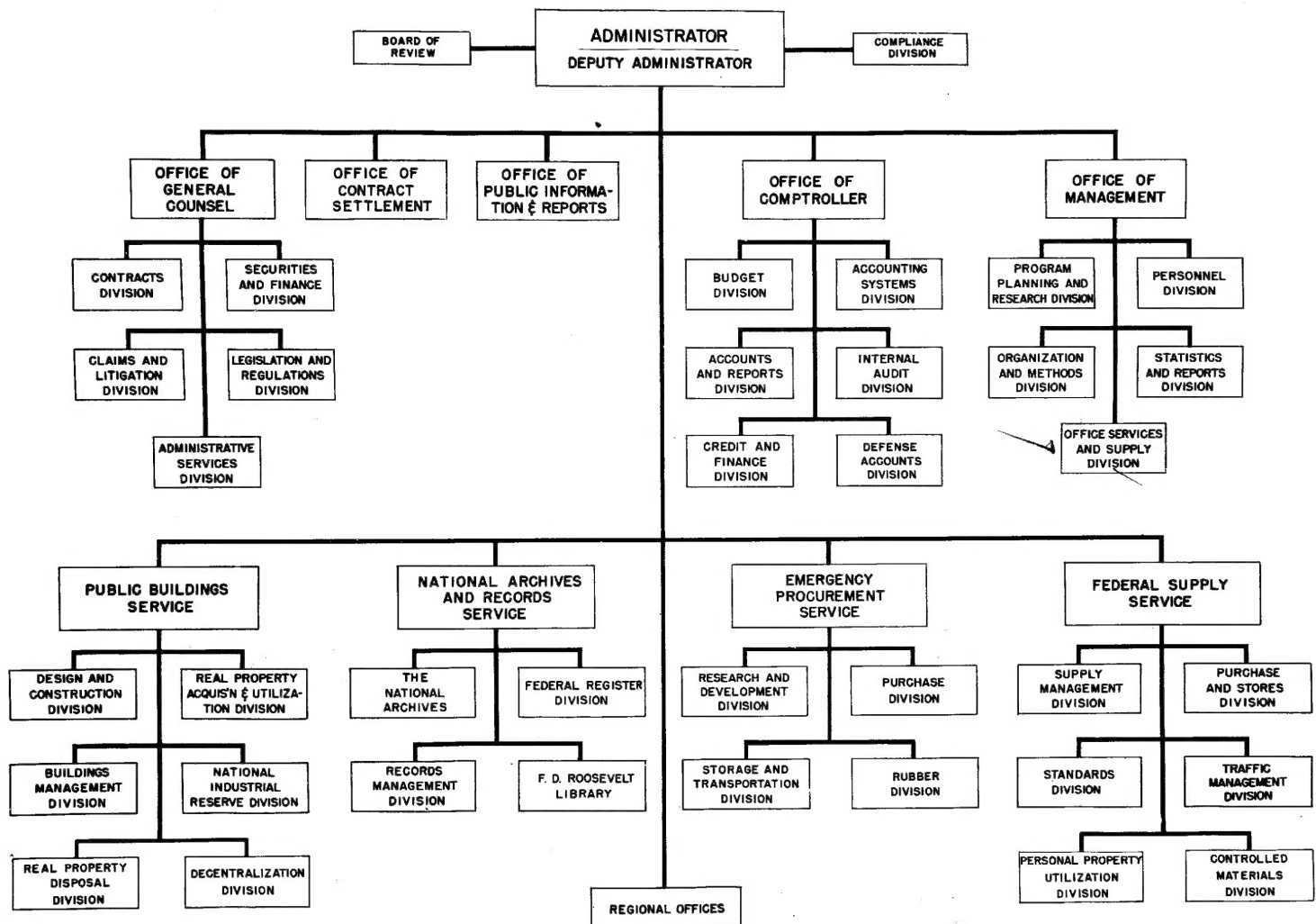


**GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE**

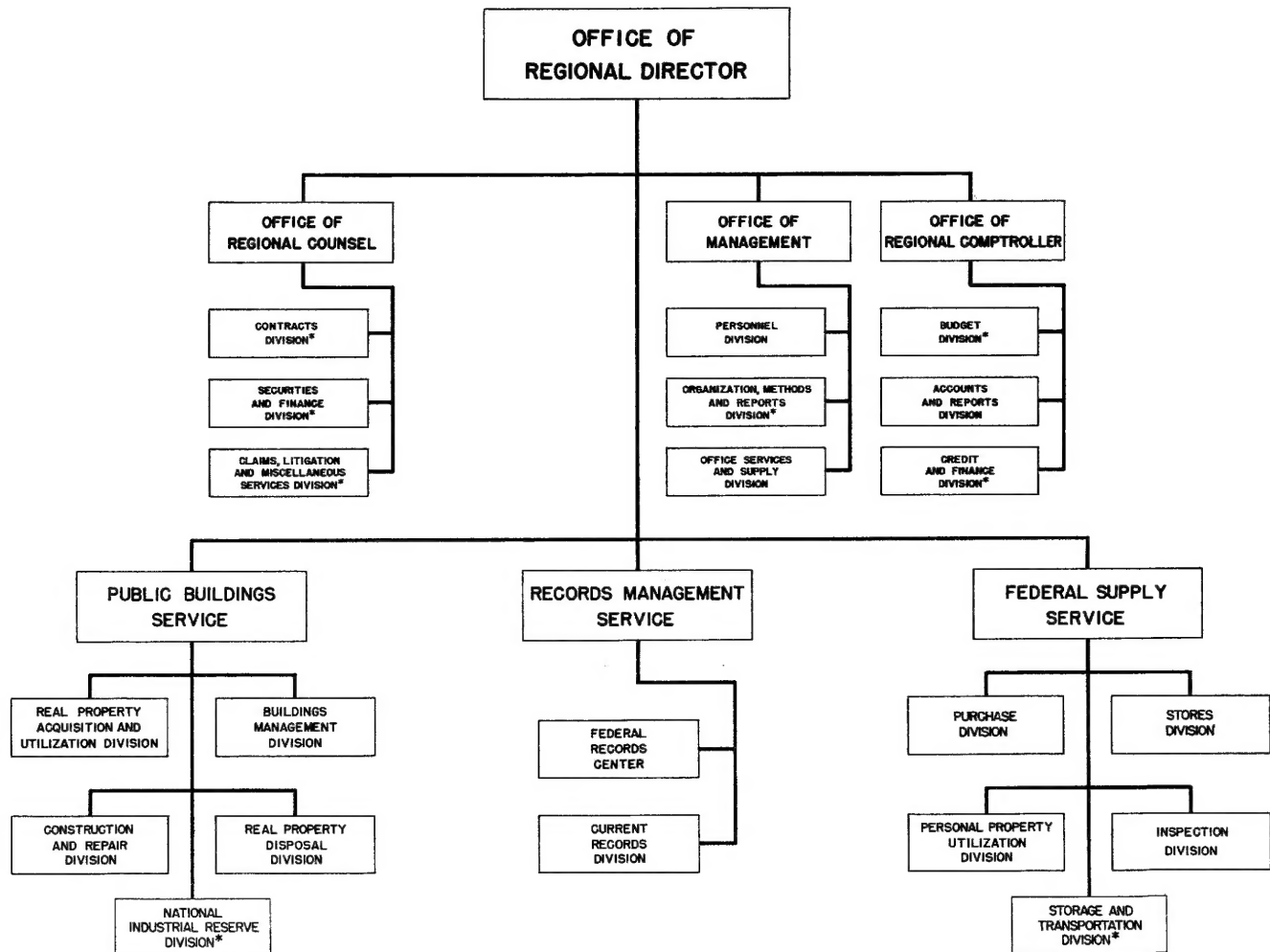


DECEMBER 5, 1950

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION



GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION REGIONAL ORGANIZATION



*Activation Subject to Prior Approval of Central Office

FEBRUARY 1, 1951